

Assessing Your Organization's Preoccupation with Failure

How well do each of the following statements describe your work unit, department, or organization? Enter next to each item below the number that corresponds with your conclusion: 1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = a great deal.

1. We focus more on our failures than our successes. _____
2. We regard close calls and near misses as a kind of failure that reveals potential danger rather than as evidence of our success and ability to avoid disaster. _____
3. We treat near misses and errors as information about the health of our system and try to learn from them. _____
4. We often update our procedures after experiencing a close call or near miss to incorporate our new experience and enriched understanding. _____
5. We make it hard for people to hide mistakes of any kind. _____
6. People are inclined to report mistakes that have significant consequences even if nobody notices. _____
7. Managers seek out and report bad news. _____
8. People feel free to talk to superiors about problems. _____
9. People are rewarded if they spot problems, mistakes, errors, or failures. _____

Scoring: Add the numbers. If you score lower than eleven, you are preoccupied with *success* and should be actively considering how you can immediately improve your focus on *failure*. If you score between eleven and eighteen, you have a moderate preoccupation with success rather than a fully mindful preoccupation with failure. Scores higher than eighteen suggest a healthy preoccupation with failure and a strong capacity for mindfulness.

Originally created by Dr. Karl E. Weick and Dr. Kathleen M. Sutcliffe in their book Managing the Unexpected: Assuring High Performance in an Age of Complexity

This audit and other assessment tools for High Reliability Organizing can be found at:
<http://www.wildfirelessons.net/OrgLearning.aspx>

Assessing Your Organization's Reluctance to Simplify

How well do each of the following statements describe your work unit, department, or organization? Enter next to each item below the number that corresponds with your conclusion:
1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = a great deal.

1. People around here take nothing for granted. _____
2. Questioning is encouraged. _____
3. We strive to challenge status quo. _____
4. People in this organization feel free to bring up problems and tough issues. _____
5. People generally prolong their analysis to better grasp the nature of the problems that come up. _____
6. People are encouraged to express different views of the world. _____
7. People listen carefully; it is rare that anyone's view is dismissed. _____
8. People are not shot down for surfacing information that could interrupt operations. _____
9. When something unexpected happens, people are more concerned with listening and conducting a complete analysis of the situation than with advocating for their view. _____
10. We appreciate skeptics. _____
11. People demonstrate trust for each other. _____
12. People show a great deal of mutual respect for each other. _____

Scoring: Add the numbers. If you score higher than twenty-four, the potential to *avoid simplification* is strong. If you score between fourteen and twenty-four, the potential for the potential to avoid simplification is moderate. Scores lower than fourteen suggest that you should actively be considering how you can improve your capabilities to prevent simplification in order to improve your organization's capacity for mindfulness.

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Assessing Your Organization's Sensitivity to Operations

Respond *agree* or *disagree* with the following statements about your work unit, department, or organization.

1. On a day-to-day basis, there is an ongoing presence of someone who is paying attention to what is happening and is readily available for consultation if something unexpected arises. _____
2. Should problems occur, someone with the authority to act is always accessible and available, especially to people on the front lines. _____
3. Supervisors readily pitch in whenever necessary. _____
4. During an average day, people come into enough contact with each other to build a clear picture of the current situation. _____
5. People are always looking for feedback about things that aren't going right. _____
6. People are familiar with operations beyond one's own job. _____
7. We have access to resources if unexpected surprises crop up. _____
8. Managers constantly monitor workloads and are able to obtain additional resources if the workload starts to become excessive. _____

Scoring: Count the number of *agree* and *disagree* responses. The greater the number of *disagree* responses, the less the *sensitivity to operations*. Use these questions to begin thinking of ways to improve your sensitivity to operations and capacity for mindfulness.

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Assessing Your Organization's Commitment to Resilience

How well do each of the following statements describe your work unit, department, or organization? Enter next to each item below the number that corresponds with your conclusion: 1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = a great deal.

1. Forecasting and predicting the future is not important here. _____
2. Resources are continually devoted to training and retraining people on the properties of the technical system. _____
3. People have more than enough training and experience for the kind of work they have to do. _____
4. This organization is actively concerned with developing people's skills and knowledge. _____
5. This organization encourages challenging assignments. _____
6. People around here are known for their ability to use their knowledge in novel ways. _____
7. There is a concern with building people's competence and response repertoires. _____
8. People have a number of informal contacts that they sometimes use to solve problems. _____
9. People learn from their mistakes. _____
10. People are able to rely on others. _____

Scoring: Add the numbers. If you score higher than twenty, the *commitment to resilience* is strong. If you score between twelve and twenty, the commitment to resilience is moderate. Scores lower than twelve suggest that you should actively consider how you can immediately begin building resilience and the capacity for mindfulness.

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Assessing the Deference to Expertise in Your Organization

How well do each of the following statements describe your work unit, department, or organization? Enter next to each item below the number that corresponds with your conclusion: 1 = not at all, 2 = to some extent, 3 = a great deal.

1. People are committed to doing their job well. _____
2. People respect the nature of one another's job activities. _____
3. If something out of the ordinary happens, people know who has the expertise to respond. _____
4. People in this organization value expertise and experience over hierarchical rank. _____
5. In this organization, the people most qualified to make decisions make them. _____
6. If something unexpected occurs, the most highly qualified people, regardless of rank, make the decision. _____
7. People typically "own" a problem until it is resolved. _____
8. It is generally easy for us to obtain expert assistance when something comes up that we don't know how to handle. _____

Scoring: Add the numbers. If you score higher than sixteen, the *deference to expertise* is strong. If you score between ten and sixteen, the deference to expertise is moderate. Scores lower than ten suggest that you should actively think of ways to improve the deference to expertise and capacity for mindfulness.

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